



CASTLETON LODGE.
*RETREAT near LEEDS,
for the Reception and Cure of Persons afflicted
with
Disorders of the Mind*

THE WELLCOME INSTITUTE FOR THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

DEPARTMENT *of* WESTERN MANUSCRIPTS

ANNUAL REVIEW 1993-94



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Autograph Letters



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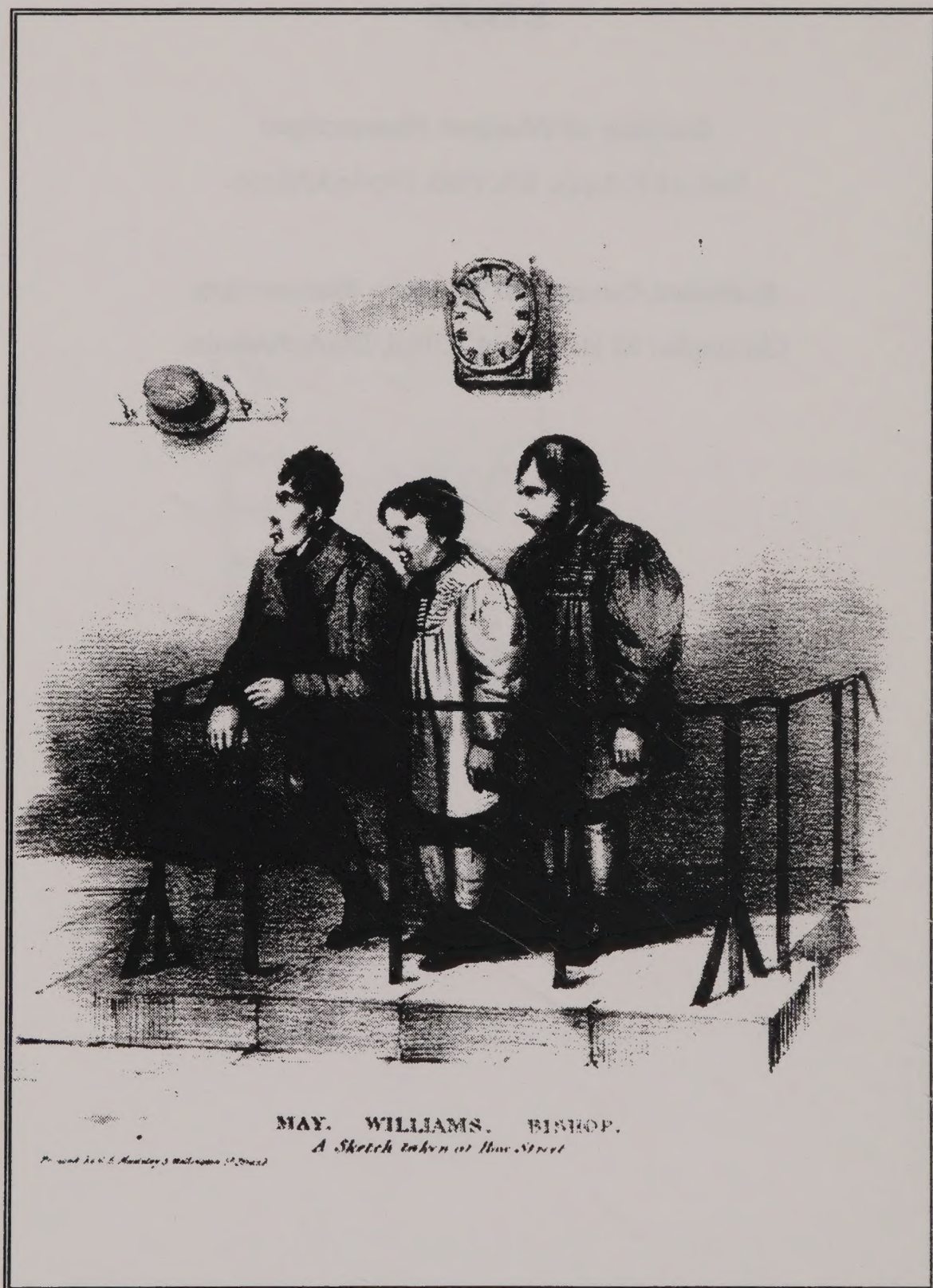
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James May, Thomas Williams and John Bishop in the dock at Bow Street, 1831. MS 7058/3 (see page 8)

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INTRODUCTION

This year's annual review covers the first full year of Chris Hilton's tenure of the post of assistant curator of Western Manuscripts. Chris's appointment provided the occasion to modify the emphasis of the assistant curator's work, with the decision to concentrate his energies on completion of the catalogue of the Hodgkin papers and creation of the framework for an automated database of autograph letters. Both these important projects have made good progress during the year under review. The autograph letter project is a particularly ambitious undertaking for a relatively small department such as ours, and will take several years to bring to full fruition, even with additional cataloguing assistance which we hope will be forthcoming in due course.

The latter part of the year was marked by some unusual interruptions and diversions. The mobilization of the library staff for three weeks in August for a stock-take of the Historical collection was both an interruption of normal working and an opportunity to learn more about the Library's holdings. At the same time administrative developments within the Wellcome Trust made more demands on the Curator's time than in former years.

Once again Tracey Wickham, the departmental secretary, has been an unfailing source of help and imaginative flair, especially regarding the layout of proposed publications, other finding aids and statistical graphs. Others who have helped include Keith Moore, who presented a 19th-century memorandum on mesmerism; Dr Edith Gilchrist, who arranged for the deposit of additional Hunterian Society ephemera and gave advice concerning the records of the Harveian Society; and Mrs Pat Bracegirdle, who advised on bibliography relating to Bichat. As ever, our colleagues in the Library, particularly in CMAC, and on the academic staff have been generous with advice and support.

ACCESSIONS

Manuscripts

We have made some interesting additions to the manuscript series this year, with the acquisition of materials ranging in date from the 16th to the 20th centuries.

Unusually, the most important addition was not an English manuscript but a French one. Xavier Bichat (1771–1802) is generally regarded as the pioneer of histopathology and one of the architects of French pre-eminence in scientific medicine in the early 19th century. Bichat's brief medical career was characterized by whirlwind activity, in practice, research, writing and teaching. Almost the final act of his life was his series of lectures on pathological anatomy delivered at the Hôtel Dieu, Paris, between September 1801 and May 1802.

The content of this final course of lectures, which set out Bichat's scheme of the membrane model of tissue structure and its disorders in its most mature form, is clearly a matter of the first importance. Unfortunately evidence of such content is both rare and relatively inaccessible, at least for British scholars. Bichat's own course notes in the Faculté de Médecine in Paris are apparently erratic and difficult to read. The transcript published in 1825 by Pierre Béclard, a former pupil, from his own notes is deficient. More extensive transcripts exist in Grenoble and Zurich but have never been published. We have now acquired a further transcript of the course, in the hand of Augustin Palle, a medical student, which is the only known copy in this country (**MSS 7059–7060**). Regrettably our transcript is not unexceptionable, for Palle, in his endeavour to record Bichat's lectures as accurately as possible, attempted to take his notes verbatim and was sometimes left behind. He therefore felt obliged to render those parts of the discourse which he had not transcribed word for word in inverted commas, and these sections included by his own admission 'innumerable errors'. This raised the hackles of a commentator, the elderly physician Pierre Joseph Amoreux, who protests in writing below Palle's admission that, far from being the duty of the student to transcribe

Colonne

D'Anatomie Pathologique
Par Xavier Bichat

Médecin Du Grand Hôpital
Municipal De Paris

Membre De la Faculté De Médecine

Professeur D'Anatomie

De Physiologie et D'histoire Naturelle Médicale.

Rédigé par Augustin Palle
Étudiant en Médecine

(Ann 10^{me})

Title page of Augustin Palle's transcript of Xavier Bichat's course of lectures
on pathological anatomy, 1801. MS 7059

verbatim it was his job to express his professor's ideas as clearly as possible, in his own words if necessary. Too minute an attention to verbal detail would only cause the scribe to lose the thread of the argument, leading to 'perfectly repulsive gibberish'. To what extent Amoreux's strictures are justified must be left to those equipped to make a close study of the manuscripts, but on cursory reading the arrangement and outline of the course appear sound, whatever the occasional deficiencies in detail.

The oldest manuscript acquired during the year was the notebook of an anonymous late Tudor or Jacobean alchemist, in English and Latin (**MS 7095**). The collection of Sir Henry Wellcome was particularly rich in alchemical works. In 1935 the purchase of the alchemical collection of the late Julius Kohn at Sotheby's brought in eighty-eight manuscripts alone. Happily all this material was deemed after Wellcome's death to be sufficiently close to medicine to be retained, thus escaping the dispersal visited on other 'non-medical' parts of the collection. Indeed, although the fundamental motivation of alchemy was metaphysical, the connection with medicine is often clear. It seems likely that our manuscript is the work of a practising doctor and a significant part of it is devoted to practical instructions for the manufacture of potable gold, an early 17th-century elixir which landed several chemical doctors in hot water with the College of Physicians. England seems to have been fertile soil for the study and practice of alchemy, but the Wellcome collection has few English alchemical manuscripts, and none until now containing an apparently original *Practica* for making potable gold.

Naval and maritime medicine is well represented in our holdings and we have acquired an interesting document for the early history of medical provision in the Navy. The medical history of the Royal Navy would be of central importance for the social history of medicine – the Navy was after all the nation's largest industrial enterprise by the eighteenth century – even without its special interest for the study of particular diseases like scurvy. The Chatham Chest, a charity established in 1590 for the support of disabled

sailors, became the chief source of relief for indigent seamen, at least until the founding of Greenwich Hospital in 1692. Its early history was however chequered, with peculation rife in the first decades of the seventeenth century. By the 1640s the affairs of the Chest seem to have been put in order, as demonstrated by the accounts of 1645–46, which we acquired this year (**MS 7077**), complementing similar records for other years in the National Maritime Museum. The accounts record payments not only to injured seamen, such as Thomas Knowles who received £1 15s. for the loss of a joint of his middle finger, but also for the defraying of lodging, food, nursing and, occasionally, funeral costs, as well as the salaries and expenses of surgeons and officials.

We have acquired a medical recipe book of Caleb Loudham (fl.1665–1712), a surgeon of Exeter who was also a noted antiquarian (**MS 7073**). The volume includes cookery recipes by Jane Loudham, who was perhaps Caleb's wife. Some medical recipes and a handful of case notes of the 1690s are probably in the hand of a son, who was evidently associated with his father in practice. The possibility exists however that Jane Loudham was not wife but daughter, and that the case notes are in her hand, which opens up the interesting prospect of a father–daughter partnership in practice. The involvement of women in surgery in the seventeenth century is well documented, usually in association with a husband or father. The relationship of Jane Loudham and her identification with the compiler of the case notes in the recipe book cannot be clearly established without recourse to local records in Devon, but the evidence of the handwriting is suggestive.

The status of the provincial surgeon of the 1690s was a world away from the position attained by the eminent metropolitan surgeon a century later. We have purchased a volume of notes taken from the surgical lectures of Astley Paston Cooper (1768–1841), by Robert Pughe, a Welsh student at St Thomas's and Guy's hospitals in 1816–17 (**MS 7096**). Cooper was famously dismissive of medicine – 'a mere system of quackery' – and according to another medical student in 1816 surgery had become so popular through

- To William Daulton of v. order
 next his brother of v. order
 in v. order of v. order
 one of his v. order by a full m
 v. said ship 2 00
- To John Daulton an ardent
 armistice of v. order of v. order
 in v. order of v. order
 of v. order of v. order
 the M^r Daulton for v. order
 one of his v. order
 ally that he trouble not the
 chest for any further relief 3 00
- To Matthew Daulton who lost
 1 of his trees in v. order
 in v. order of v. order
 be paid 5. for v. order
 him in full consideration no
 more to trouble the chest for
 further relief 4 00
- To the Daulton's late brother
 deputy in v. order
 open v. order of v. order
 returned on his chest (notwithstanding
 standing 6. for v. order
 in full v. order
 the chest for v. order
 the last of v. order
 for v. order
 hands, v. order
 the chest for v. order
 to him v. order
 to his chest 4 00
- To George Daulton pensioner
 to have his charges paid
 to London 1 00
- To John Daulton a pensioner to have
 his charges paid to London
 having made a journey from
 to Chatham, for his pension 1 00
- To v. order of v. order
 for his v. order 2 00
- To the widow of John Daulton
 for her v. order 2 00
- To v. order of v. order
 for her v. order 2 00

21 00

Accounts of the Chatham
 Chest, 1645-46. MS 7077

Cooper's appeal that it was 'fashionable for the pupils to neglect medicine altogether, as an inferior branch'. Cooper never published his own lectures, although they appeared anonymously in the *Lancet* and were later published by various pupils. There are numerous transcripts in manuscript in our own collection, mainly of earlier date; few however are as clear and legible as Pughe's, which seems also to give more attention than most to the treatment of gunshot wounds. The invariably fatal consequences of stomach wounds until recent times are well brought home by Cooper's recollection that when abroad he had had 'opportunities of seeing a great number of gunshot wounds, not less than 2500; not one of these was in the abdomen, but there were several of them in (the) chest'. We have also acquired transcripts of a number of contemporary French anatomical and surgical lectures, delivered in Paris by Jean Nicholas Marjolin (1780–1850), Pierre Augustin Bécлар (1785–1825), and Jacques Lisfranc (1790–1847), taken in 1820–22 by a student, A Leonardon (**MSS 7061–7065**).

Astley Cooper was an obsessional dissector and well known during his lifetime for dealings with 'resurrectionists'. A number of body-snatching and 'burking' scandals were exposed in the period before the passing of the 1832 Anatomy Act, including the case of murder of an Italian boy, Carlo Ferrari, in London in 1831, by John Bishop, Thomas Williams and James May. We have acquired a handful of documents relating to the conviction of the culprits (**MS 7058**). The complicity of the medical profession in body-snatching is illustrated by reports of the trial: Davis, the porter at Guy's, declined purchasing Ferrari's body, but only because it was not needed; a Newington dentist called Mills bought Ferrari's teeth for 12s, despite being informed by May that 'the body from which they had been taken had not been buried at the time'. The discovery of Ferrari's clothes buried in Bishop's garden sealed the conviction.

Long before the passing of the Anatomy Act London had become the chief destination of ambitious provincial students of medicine and surgery, in search of teaching, clinical experience and hands-on dissecting practice. Hugh Smith (d.1790), an Edinburgh trained physician, began teaching a

course on the theory and practice of physic at his house in Mincing Lane, which became very popular. In 1760 he had printed privately a textbook, *Formulae medicamentorum*, for the use of his students, which in later editions became a medical best-seller. We have now acquired an interleaved copy of the 1760 version, containing manuscript annotations apparently by William Withy, a London surgeon, which were incorporated in the first public edition of 1768, produced when Smith gave up lecturing.

Robert Gardiner Hill (1811–1878), a Lincoln surgeon who was later to make his name as a specialist in the treatment of mental illness, was studying in London in 1834, the year he seems to have begun the medical notebook which we purchased this year (**MS 7076**). The volume contains notes of surgical lectures and from printed sources, as well as a report on cases treated with iodine presented to the Harveian Society by William McClure on 26 April 1836. The minutes of the Harveian Society, which are still in the latter's keeping, do not seem to include notes of this meeting, which Hill presumably attended. By that date he was already house-surgeon at Lincoln lunatic asylum, and the volume also contains reports of post-mortems performed there by Hill, as well as various notes and memoranda in his hand on insanity, taken from published sources.

The most curious acquisition of the year was a set of instructions from an anonymous French father to his son, dating from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, regarding personal hygiene and regimen (**MS 7100**). Intermingled with a plethora of more or less sensible conventional advice are bizarre injunctions, such as the recommendation to wipe the sweat from behind the ears on waking – 'a sure prophylactic against toothache' – the admonition against stopping a nosebleed too soon, and the warning against staying in bed too long in the morning, lest it result in constipation.

Other acquisitions during the year have included an apothecary's bill from Isaac Garnier, 1712; the copy-will of Thomas Bonny, surgeon, 1740; an epitaph for William Stukeley, c.1765; a certificate of attendance at midwifery lectures for John Powell, medical student, 1783; an army surgeon's mate certificate for James Gilchrist, 1800; a certificate of health for convicts

embarked for New South Wales, signed by John Porter, naval surgeon, 1818; lectures on *materia medica* by Robert Christison, transcribed by J H Pring, Edinburgh, 1834–35; a set of exercise books containing phrenological lecture notes, 19th century; reports of the Medical Officer of Health for Bootle, Lancs., 1895–1926; and additional modern case files from Ticehurst House mental hospital.

Autograph Letters

We continue to add to the Wellcome Library's collection of Autograph Letters. Noteworthy acquisitions this year have included a letter by the London merchant, and later Lord Mayor, John Moore (1620–1702) discussing the spread of the Great Plague; a letter from George North (1710–1772) to Anthony Askew (1722–1774) on Rahere, founder of St Bartholomew's Hospital; a letter of Edward Hobart describing smallpox in London, 1752 – 'soe many people appearing in the streets with the small pox daily'; a letter from a Scottish physician, T Duncan, to a colleague, J Dundas, on his involvement in the '45 Rebellion and on treatment of a patient with wind trapped in the womb, 1753; a letter by Admiral Lord Howe (1726–1799) on influenza in the Fleet; letters of William Samuel Forbes, naval surgeon, on conditions at Port Royal naval hospital, Jamaica, 1796; letters of William Wilberforce (1759–1833), one of 1804 referring to the vaccination of his children; a letter from Thomas Anderson, a Selkirk surgeon, to a fellow surgeon, Adam Park, brother of the explorer Mungo Park, on treatment of menstrual disorders, 1839 – 'are you in the habit of ordering such an indelicate remedy as leeches to the pudenda?'; a long letter from the novelist Elizabeth Gaskell (1810–1865) on the subject of mesmeric healing (a transcript and commentary are to appear shortly in *Medical History*); an account by the young doctor George Kingsley (1827–1892), brother of the writer Charles Kingsley, on the political ferment of the late 1840s and the cholera epidemic of 1848–49; and a memorandum by W S Hendry on mesmeric healing, 19th century.

Other items have included letters by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (1836–1917), John Attfield (d.1911), Mary Carpenter (1807–1877), Thomas Clarkson (1760–1846), David Livingstone (1813–1873), to John Thomas Queckett (1815–1861), and Mary Somerville (1780–1872); prescriptions initialled by Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802); a certificate signed by Dominique Larrey (1766–1842); and a circular advertising Castleton Lodge lunatic asylum, Yorks., 1830.

CATALOGUING AND LISTING

Manuscripts

A total of 44 manuscripts were catalogued during the year (**MSS 7058–7101**), some seventeen of which were new accessions described above.

The most important of the earlier acquisitions catalogued was a large group of letters and papers by Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), which for reasons of convenience was removed from the Autograph Letter collection and catalogued as **MSS 7080–7094**. Humboldt was exactly the sort of figure to appeal to Henry Wellcome's imagination. Explorer, naturalist, friend and correspondent of so many leading scientists and scholars of the early nineteenth century, Humboldt's career touched at many points Wellcome's own wide field of interests. Much of our collection of some 350 items relates to Humboldt's long residence in Paris between 1804 and 1827, a period of great scientific development. Humboldt's letters are mainly to French men of science, publishers, officials and others, and provide some idea of the range of his scientific interests and social contacts. Even the post-1827 material is usually of French origin, written in French, since most of it was purchased by Wellcome in Paris. Subjects covered include geodesy and magnetism, geography and geology, natural history and zoology, barometry, cholera, ancient Indian arithmetic, oriental languages, and many more. One letter of about 1840 to an unidentified French geographer refers to the Pacific current to which Humboldt gave his name and the contribution of Captain Fitzroy's observations in *Voyage of the Beagle*, a copy of which Darwin sent Humboldt in 1839, to his study of this

phenomenon. A number of Humboldt's letters to French correspondents after his return to Berlin in 1827 are letters of introduction for young German scholars and travellers. Others refer to his attendance at the Prussian court in his capacity as a royal chamberlain, which he seems to have found rather tiresome, but at least provided a salary. That it provided additional benefits is attested by an undated letter in which Humboldt describes a massive Altaic vase, a present from the Tsar, which the King of Prussia bought from Humboldt for 36 000 francs: 'even my brother's house full of marbles and antiquities at Tegel near Berlin', he wrote, referring to Wilhelm von Humboldt's celebrated collection of classical remains, 'could not but cede first place in weight.'

Humboldt's correspondence was vast, our collection representing only a small fraction of even his surviving letters, perhaps two per cent. Numerous published editions of his correspondence have been produced since the 1860s, the latest, *Alexander von Humboldt, Briefe aus Amerika, 1799–1804*, edited by Ulrike Moheit (Berlin, 1993), incorporating two of our letters. Most of the others remain unpublished.

One of Humboldt's many scientific friends in Paris was the zoologist Isidore Geoffroy St Hilaire (1805–1861). A group of his papers has long formed part of the Autograph Letter collection, where strictly speaking they have no place since they are not letters at all, but research notes. For this reason and on account of bulk we have added them to the manuscript series as **MSS 7066–7071**. The papers were purchased by Wellcome in Paris in 1935, some fifteen years it seems before those of Isidore's more famous father, Etienne Geoffroy St Hilaire (1772–1844) left his descendants' hands and came on the open market. No substantial body of papers of either father or son appears to have found its way into a public repository in France. Predictably the papers are difficult to read and understand – they are after all mainly jottings and scribbles meant for Isidore's eyes only – but they appear to range over the whole field of his interests, from evolution to horsemeat, the nutritional value of which he was a staunch advocate. They also include a few tantalizing zoological sketches. The research value of the material is difficult to

gauge without specialist knowledge, but we hope that inclusion of the papers in the main manuscript series will raise their profile and attract the attention of students of the great 19th-century evolution debates and others.

We have catalogued a substantial group of letters of Thomas Madden Stone (fl. 1838–82), librarian of the Royal College of Surgeons, most of which were purchased in 1945 (**MS 7074**). In addition to his official duties Stone was an assiduous collector of autographs, and many of the letters, dating in some cases back to the 1750s, are from his autograph collection. Other remnants of the collection are in the RCS library, and it seems now to be impossible to make any sense of the division of these or indeed the official letters between our two institutions. Among the latter are letters from Stone to the surgeon Charles Brooke, William Clift and Richard Owen.

Other manuscripts catalogued during the year have included an 18th century volume of notes and extracts relating to the life of Alof de Wignacourt (d.1622), Grand Master of the Order of St John (presumably overlooked when the bulk of the material in the Wellcome Library concerning the Order was donated to the Maltese archives in 1956); a group of 17th-century English administrative documents of no medical relevance but some interest, including an order from Sir John Finch, physician and ambassador at Constantinople, for the payment of his interpreter at the interminable negotiations in Adrianople for confirmation of English privileges in the Ottoman Empire, 1675; a collection of documents relating to British naval and maritime affairs, including a copy certificate by Captain John Drape of Liverpool concerning the successful use of tar water to combat smallpox aboard a Guinea slaver in 1742, and a letter from John Pasco to William Rivers about the amputation of the latter's foot at Trafalgar – 'you never murmured'; documents relating to Esprit Aubert, master surgeon of Aix-en-Provence, 1662–91 (removed from the Autograph Letter collection); and the log of the French vessel *La Brilolle*, from La Rochelle to the West Indies and back, 1764–65 (which was evidently overlooked or excluded when Wellcome's sizeable collection of ships' logs was sold to the National Maritime Museum in 1944).

We having a due sense of the extraordinary
 Dangers and Pains, w^{ch} Our first Druggerman Sig Giorgio
 Draperis underwent daily, for the space of five Months,
 during the Time of Our Negotiations at Adrianople,
 And having likewise a due sense of His Fidelity, Appli-
 cation, & utmost discharging of His Trust in those Affairs;
 Wee can doe no less then to make Him some Recognition
 upon Our Part: Which Wee doe accordingly, by ordering
 you M^r Dudley North Treasurer, to pay unto the said
 Sig: Giorgio Draperis, Two Hundred Lion Dollars; Cha-
 rging it to the Account of the Light Hors^e: Levant
 Company; leaving His further recompense to the Provi-
 dence of the said Company: Which Wee are persuaded
 He deserves, as Wee have signified by letter to them
 Given Under Our Hand this $\frac{11}{31}$ of October 1675.
 From Demetrius Hill.

John Finch

For M^r Dudley North Treas^r

We have produced a brief handlist to the papers of J T Clover, mentioned in last year's review, which brings together descriptions of material in Moorat's published catalogue and the typescript supplement, and provides a select index of correspondents. One of these was a London surgeon, Charles Kidd, whose public description of Clover's chloroform inhaler as dangerously 'cumbersome' led to an acrimonious exchange of letters in 1869. We have also begun to index a group of letters received by Henry Lee (1826–1888), naturalist to the Brighton aquarium, briefly catalogued some years ago. We have over 700 letters received by Lee in the collection (**MSS 5376–5400**), but most have been ordered by correspondent and are thus readily accessible. The residue, some two hundred items by various less frequently occurring authors, arranged chronologically, are now being indexed (**MS 5400**). Correspondents range from John Kirk (1832–1922), consul-general at Zanzibar, on Indian Ocean corals, to Frances Freeling Broderip (1830–1878), the children's author, on the illness and death of her brother, Tom Hood (1835–1874), the humorist. The bulk of the subject matter relates predictably enough to the natural history of the sea, from experiments to shed light on the hearing of porpoises to the correct pronunciation of 'octopus'.

Some 325 manuscripts in the department's holdings (numbered from **MS 8000** onwards) originated from staff of the former Wellcome Historical Medical Museum. They are chiefly essays on various aspects of medical history, but also include facsimiles and transcripts of manuscripts in other repositories. The number of readers seeking access to this material has risen and as a result an outline list has been compiled for inclusion in the supplementary catalogue of manuscripts.

Autograph letters

The Autograph Letter collection has for long been the poor relation of the Wellcome manuscript holdings. The repository of every conceivable type of missive from lengthy memoranda to calling cards, the collection contains

many important and interesting letters, but they have tended to sink with little trace in a vast ocean of documentation. Besides, the collection's finding aid is opaque and inconsistent. During the year a thorough review was carried out of how the Autograph Letter collection might in future be stored and made available in a fashion that would best meet the needs of researchers. In particular there is a strong requirement for a finding aid which facilitates access not merely by author's name (as is the case presently with the old card index), but also by subject, to bring to light important letters by obscure correspondents. Various different computer packages were investigated; eventually it was decided to use the same system currently used for the Library's printed holdings, and an input template was designed and tested with a few trial entries. As well as being catalogued in more detail, the letters will also be transferred from their existing storage in metal filing cabinets to folders and boxes of archival card, a process which has already begun. It is envisaged that this project will take several years to complete.

During the year the existing backlog of letters was catalogued, as well as the new accessions noted above.

Barlow papers

The professional correspondence of Sir Thomas Barlow (1845–1945) has been indexed but sadly no time found to embark on cataloguing the papers of his wife and children, to bring the Barlow catalogue to completion.

Barlow was a reserved and cautious man whose diagnoses and opinions were rarely given without lengthy consideration. One wonders whether this lay behind the bemusement of one of his patients, the Duke of Rutland, perhaps more used to the bluff style of physician, when he wrote after one of Barlow's visits in 1913: 'our interview this morning left several matters unexplained ...

1. when may I drink after meals? (I doubt being able to stick to this)
2. is black coffee bad for me? (I adore it)

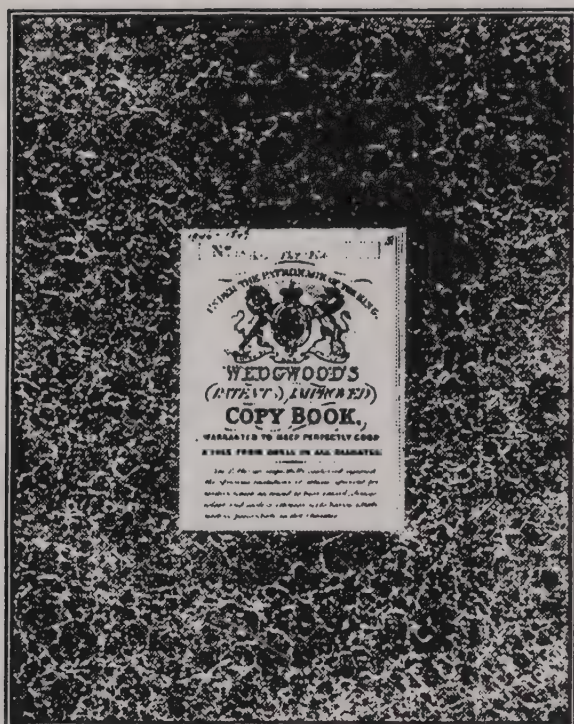
3. ought I to avoid soup? (which is the only part of dinner I like)
4. tobacco? (my only solace).'

Hodgkin papers

The Hodgkin papers have now been sorted and ordered in their entirety. The core of the collection is formed by the papers of Thomas Hodgkin (1798–1866), but there are also noteworthy groups of papers by or relating to his father, John Hodgkin senior (1766–1845), grammarian and tutor; his brother, John Hodgkin junior (1800–1875), barrister and Quaker preacher; and the latter's father-in-law Luke Howard (1772–1864), meteorologist; as well as earlier, contemporary and later members of the interconnected Hodgkin, Howard, Lloyd, Fox and Rickman families. The collection is thus not merely of importance for Hodgkin's medical career: it also documents his extensive philanthropic interests and those of the other members of his extended family, which centre on the struggle to abolish slavery and to win humane treatment for the natives of newly-colonized territories. Letters between family members and from a large number of other correspondents (represented in the letters to Thomas Hodgkin are Astley Cooper, Georges Cuvier, Marshall Hall, Sir John Herschell, and Richard Owen, among many others) discuss medicine, natural history, geology, social issues and domestic matters; the letters by the children of John Hodgkin junior are a particularly appealing window into domestic life in the 1830s and 1840s. Also present are fragments of autobiography, the contents of which range from John Hodgkin senior's account of his experiences in Paris during the French Revolution to John Hodgkin junior's description of a childhood visit to Southend-on-Sea:

‘My recollections of the River, of the scenery on the opposite bank, of the mouth of the Medway & of the Shipping are very pleasing. The memory of the River itself at low water, & of the miles of black mud is equally dismal.’

Detailed cataloguing and indexing of the collection is proceeding. The single largest section is the letters of Thomas Hodgkin, and these – over 2000



Letterbook of Thomas Hodgkin, 1846–1852. PP/HO/D/A2446

items – have now been processed. In this interim period, pending production of a full finding aid for readers, it is now at least possible to give researchers a rough idea of the nature of the collection, and several readers have made use of it during the year 1993–94.

CONSERVATION

Conservation during the year 1993–34 was restricted to refileing of autograph letters, in new acid-free folders, mainly by Tracey Wickham. The Conservation department's library-wide survey of conservation needs identified a number of priorities regarding our collections, which will begin to be addressed in 1994–95.

READERS AND ENQUIRIES

Some one hundred and twenty-five individual readers consulted Western Manuscripts and/or Autograph Letters in the Library during the year, several

making multiple visits. This figure is roughly the same as that for 1992–93, despite the closure of the Library for most of August. In addition seventy-five postal enquiries were answered – considerably fewer than last year – apart from verbal and telephone queries, some of which were also answered by letter.

Once again the subjects of research represented by these statistics were remarkably varied. They included medieval sanitation, early magic, medicine in Renaissance Italy, English alchemy, early modern science, the history of ageing, the Great Plague, the medical profession in Scotland, attitudes to the female body, anatomical illustration, scurvy, the development of histology, Charles Lewis Meryon, body-snatching, the London Missionary Society, Thomas Laycock, Richard Owen, the history of nursing, William Hoffman, Henry Charlton Bastian and spontaneous generation, and many more. We continued to assist the Location Register of English literary manuscripts and the Faraday correspondence project as in previous years.

We have produced a third subject guide, to manuscripts relating to military and naval medicine, to add to the existing guides to materials for the history of women in medicine and psychiatry.

REPROGRAPHY

Requests for new microfilm of twenty-one manuscripts were received during the year, apart from those where a negative film is already held. Numerous requests for copies were serviced by photocopying, and a new order form, which is more appropriate to current conditions, was produced. All photocopying requests continue to be processed by the department's staff, in the interests of security and safe-handling, but this is necessarily time-consuming.

PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

Keith Moore's article on Nicholas Gainsford's book (mentioned last year) duly appeared in *Medical History*, (1993) vol. 37, no.4, p.442–7. An article by Chris Hilton on the Elizabeth Gaskell letter described above was prepared for inclusion in one of the 1995 issues.

Chris also published an article entitled 'Building Act Cases in the Greater London Record Office Modern Records Section: An Automated Cataloguing Programme', in *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, (1994) vol. 15, no.1, p.39–50.

The Curator's address to the Hunterian Society in October 1993, entitled 'Medical science and medical history: the Hunterian Society and its collection of manuscripts', as well as descriptions of the items from the Society's records and collection exhibited on that occasion, will appear in *Transactions of the Hunterian Society*. The descriptive booklet on the Western Manuscripts, mentioned last year, is on course for publication in 1995.

Richard Palmer's catalogue of Western Manuscripts (**MSS 5120–6790**) should be published in late 1995.

MEETINGS AND VISITS

The scientific meeting of the Hunterian Society commemorating the bicentenary of the death of John Hunter was held in the Wellcome Building on 18 October 1993. A small exhibition of Hunterian Society manuscripts, which are on deposit in the Wellcome Library, was displayed, and the Curator joined Dr Edith Gilchrist and Roy Porter in addressing the meeting.

Contributions were also made to Library exhibitions on the following occasions: the 9th International Conference organised by the Society for the History of Natural History in April 1994; the visit by members of the American Osler Society in May 1994 and the exhibition to mark the 250th birthday of John Coakley Lettsom in June 1994. In addition, a selection of Western manuscripts were shown to Prince Michael of Kent when he visited the Library in May 1994.

The Curator and Assistant Curator addressed various groups of readers and students about the collections during the year, including Finnish students of English history in October 1993 (when a number of manuscripts of the English Renaissance were shown), UCL archives diploma students and members of the RAMC Historical Society in November 1993, postgraduate

students attached to the Institute of Historical Research in April 1994 and September 1994, and staff of the BMA library in August 1994.

Professor Vivian Nutton used numerous manuscripts to illustrate his talks to BSc students on medieval medical education and UCL students on Greek palaeography, which were attended by staff of the department.

A range of documents from the Ticehurst records deposited in the Wellcome Institute were selected by Chris Hilton for loan to the exhibition at Bexhill-on-Sea Museum on Victorian mental health in Sussex during April and May 1994.

The Curator attended various meetings, including the BRA conference on medical archives in December 1994 (for which a range of photographs to illustrate Dr Trevor Turner's paper on the Ticehurst casebooks was chosen), and the Library Association seminar on funding heritage collections in research libraries in June 1994, both held in the Wellcome Building; the summer conference of the Association for Manuscripts and Archives in Research Collections (AMARC) at SOAS in June 1994; and a seminar on sales catalogue monitoring organized by the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts in July 1994. He also heard papers read at some of the history of medicine symposia of the Wellcome Institute and at 'work in progress' seminars. In addition, the staff of the department attended several venues to evaluate automated cataloguing packages.

MEDICAL ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS SURVEY (MAMS)

Significant progress was made with survey work during the year. Chris Hilton reported on the large and varied collections of the Royal College of Surgeons, one of the few remaining major London record repositories still outstanding at the start of the year. The archives and manuscripts of the College had not been systematically described since 1928, when V G Plarr's catalogue of manuscripts was published, and the survey was therefore particularly challenging. Other repositories surveyed during the year included

the archive departments of the London boroughs of Barnet, Croydon and Westminster. In addition the Curator revised the existing report on the holdings of Lambeth Palace Library, and produced a MAMS report on our own manuscript collections, which has proved useful incidentally as an introductory finding aid for researchers in the reading room.

The Curator continued to act as editor of the MAMS project, responsible for collating reports and updating inventories of repositories.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Curator continued as manager of the Poynter Room (rare materials reading room). In this capacity he supervised the day-to-day administration of the room, liaised with other Wellcome Trust departments, especially the Medical Photographic Library, collected and analysed reader statistics and covered gaps in the supervisory timetable.

The Curator has been appointed to the advisory editorial board of *Trp3*, the new research and funding news bulletin of the Wellcome Trust

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